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DIEV ET MON DROIT.

By the King.

A Proclamation commanding the due execution of the Lawes made againſt Eating and Selling of Fleſh in Lent, and other times prohibited.

WHere by the Statute made in the ſecond and third yeere of the Reigne of the late King Edward the ſixt, for many weighty reaſons in that Acte ſpecified, prouiſion was made againſt eating of Fleſh, vpon any Friday, or Saturday, or the Embring dayes, and other dayes commonly called Vigils, or in any day in Lent, or vpon other dayes commonly reputed Fiſh-dayes, vnder the paine of forfeiting, for the firſt offence ten ſhillings, and for the ſecond offence twenty ſhillings, and to ſuffer impriſonment with like paines for euery time offending. And by the Statute made in the fift and ſixt yeeres of the ſaid Kings Reigne, diuers dayes in the ſame Acte mentioned, are ordained to bee faſting dayes; and in the fift yeere of the Reigne of the late Queene Elizabeth, (amongſt other Conſtitutions) for the maintenance of the Nauie of this Realme, a penalty of three pounds is impoſed vpon euery man that ſhall eate Fleſh vpon any dayes then vſed as a Fiſh-day, or impriſonment by the ſpace of three moneths for euery time offending, with a forfeiture of fourty ſhillings vpon the Owner of the houſe wherein it ſhal be eaten, he not diſcloſing it to the Magiſtrate. And in the ſeuen & twentieth yeere of the Reigne of the ſaid late Queene, it is ordayned, That the Inholders, Victuallers, and others in that Acte mentioned (ſelling Fleſh-Victuall) at thoſe times to any not lawfully Licenſed to eate the ſame, ſhal forfeit for euery time offending, fiue pounds, and ſuffer tenne dayes impriſonment; Of which Lawes ſome mitigation was made, by a Statute made in the fiue and thirtieth yeere of the Reigne of the ſaid late Queene Elizabeth, whereby the eater of Fleſh vpon the times prohibited, ſhall forfeit twenty ſhillings for euery offence, and ſuſtaine one moneths impriſonment; And the ſeller not diſcloſing, ſhall forfeit for euery offence thirteene ſhillings foure pence; By all which Lawes it is manifeſt, that albeit the makers of them did well know, that one Day, or one Meate of it ſelfe, was not more holy, more pure, or more cleane then another; And that the Meates defiled not, but that the ſame were lawfull, ſo that they were not vſed in diſobedience, and vice; yet they did finde that diuers turned their knowledge to ſatiſfie their ſenſualitie, contemned abſtinence, which was a meanes to vertue, and to ſubdue mens bodies to their ſoules and ſpirits.

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And finding that the increaſe of Fiſher-men was the meanes to preſerue the Nauie of this Realme, and that the abſtinence occaſioned the ſauing and increaſe of Fleſh, were carefull to ordaine thoſe Lawes as politique Lawes, for the increaſe of Fiſher-men and Mariners, and repairing of Port Townes, and maintaining of Nauigation, and the ſame ought as politique Lawes to be obeyed. And notwithſtanding the execution of them be requiſite, and his Maieſty by his often Proclamations commanded that they ſhould be put in due execution vpon thoſe that ſhould offend againſt them: Yet ſuch hath beene the common neglect of many of his people, that they haue not onely frequently offended againſt thoſe good Lawes, and incurred the penalties of them, but haue committed thoſe offences with high contempt. And diuers of his Officers, and miniſters of Iuſtice, haue beene remiſſe and negligent in puniſhing of them, and in preuention of the offences, which hee will not longer ſuffer.

Therefore his Maieſtie doth require, and ſtraitly charge and command all his people, the common good of this Realme requiring it, that due execution bee had of his Lawes, vpon all thoſe that ſhall offend againſt them, either in eating or venting of Fleſh at times prohibited, or not Faſting vpon the dayes by his Lawes appointed for Faſting dayes, not onely vnder the paines ordained by the Statutes, but ſuch further puniſhment as by the Lawes may be inflicted on wilfull contemners of his Lawes and Proclamations, requiring due obedience vnto them in any of his Courts of Iuſtice. And doth alſo command all his Officers and miniſters of Iuſtice, that they cauſe diligent enquirie to be made of all ſuch as ſhall offend heerein, and inflict ſuch paines and puniſhment on them as by the Lawes are required: And that for preuention of ſuch abuſes, they take all good wayes, as by his Proclamations and Orders lately publiſhed is commanded: Letting them know, that his Maieſtie will cauſe enquirie to be made of their remiſſeneſſe in this behalfe: and that ſuch puniſhment for their negligence ſhall be inflicted on them, as ought to be vpon the neglectors or contemners of his Lawes, and thoſe that ſhall not obſerue their duties and truſt repoſed in them.

And vnleſſe by this occaſion, Fiſhmongers, and others ſelling Fiſh, and other Victuals allowed by the Lawes to be eaten at thoſe times, ſhould preſume to enhaunce the prices of them, his Maieſtie doth ſtraitly charge and command the Maior of his Citie of London, and all others that haue the keeping of the Aſſiſe of Victuall, that they take diligent care to keepe reaſonable Aſſiſe and Prices vpon Fiſh and other Victuall, vnder the paines by his Lawes to bee inflicted vpon Misgouernours of the places committed to their charge, and ſuch further puniſhment as their ſeuerall offences ſhall merit.

Giuen at His Maieſties Court at White-hall, the ſeuen and twentieth day of Ianuary, in the ſeuenth yeere of the Reigne of our Soueraigne Lord, CHARLES, by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c.

God ſaue the King.

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